

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2908

LIMDIS

JAKARTA PASS WOLFF DELEGATION

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT KS US

SUBJ: MEETING OF WOLFF CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION WITH PRESIDENT
PARK

SUMMARY: WOLFF DELEGATION MET WITH PRESIDENT PARK APRIL 11
FOR WIDE RANGING DISCUSSION CONVERGING BOTH HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AND
TROOP WITHDRAWAL. PARK ON TROOP WITHDRAWAL URGED SUFFICIENT
TIME, FOUR TO FIVE YEARS, TO STRENGTHEN KOREAN FORCES TO
DEFEND THEMSELVES SUCCESSFULLY, REQUESTING US HELP AND
COOPERATION IN SELLING MILITARY HARDWARE TO KOREA. ON HUMAN
RIGHTS, BUT RECOGNIZING PROBLEMS FACED IN US, PARK INSISTED
THAT SOME RESTRICTIONS NECESSARY IN TERMS OF NATIONAL SECURITY
AND THAT MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS REPENT BEFORE BEING RELEASED.
END SUMMARY.

1. CONGRESSMAN WOLFF AND FULL DELEGATION MET APRIL 11,
ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR SNEIDER, WITH PRESIDENT PARK.
CONVERSATION WAS LENGTHY ONE, FRANK.

2. WOLFF DESCRIBED CURRENT PROBLEMS FACED IN US WITH
RESPECT TO KOREA AND DIFFICULTIES FACED AS RESULT, IN
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CONTINUED ASSISTANCE FOR KOREA. HE URGED POSITIVE STEPS BY ROKG,
EMPHASING THAT HUMAN RIGHTS WAS NOT LINKED WITH CURRENT FORCE
WITHDRAWAL. HE RECOGNIZED THAT WE COULD NOT TELL KOREAN GOVERN-
MENT HOW TO DEAL WITH ITS AFFAIRS AND DID NOT WISH TO PREACH
OR PRESSURE SINCE DECISION RESTED WITH ROKG. NEVERTHELESS THERE
WAS GREAT CONCERN IN US AMONG CONSTITUTENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS
QUESTION AND A JOINT INTEREST IN WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

OF DEMOCRACY IN KOREA.

3. PARK RESPONDED THAT HE WAS WELL AWARE OF KOREA'S PROBLEMS AS A TARGET OF ATTACK BY BOTH THE AMERICAN PRESS AND CONGRESS AND FELT THAT THERE WERE THOSE WHO WISHED TO LAUNCH AND MOUNT A PERSONAL ATTACK AGAINST HIMSELF. HE FELT THAT HIS CRITICS DO NOT HAVE A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF KOREA'S PROBLEMS AND SHOULD TRY TO DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF KOREA'S REALITY. HE FELT ONE OF THE MAIN CAUSES OF KOREA'S PROBLEMS WAS THE THIRTY TO THIRTY-FIVE ANTI-KOREAN ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA MOUNTING ATTACKS ON ROKG AND QUESTIONED WHAT THE SOURCES OF THEIR FUNDING MIGHT BE.

4. PARK SAID HE HAD HAD LENGTHY AND STRAIGHT FORWARD TALKS WITH AMBASSADOR AND THEREFORE WAS WELL AWARE OF PROBLEMS IN CONGRESS. HE CONTENDED THAT THERE IS NO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE PER SE IN KOREA SINCE THERE HAS BEEN DUE PROCESS OF LAW UNDER CONSTITUTION, TRIALS BY INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY, AND ALLEGATIONS TO THE CONTRARY, NO TORTURE OR POOR TREATMENT OF THOSE IN JAIL. HE UNDERSTANDS FULL WELL US INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND DESIRE FOR FREE EXPRESSION AND THAT GENEROUS ATTITUDE TO MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS WOULD MUCH HELP IMPROVE HIS IMAGE IN US. HOWEVER, UNLESS MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS REPENT, HE IS NOT PREPARED TO RELEASE THEM. OTHERWISE THEY WOULD CLAIM THEY WERE RELEASED AS RESULT OF US PRESSURES AND PICTURE THEMSELVES AS HEROES AND MARTYRS, LEADING TO DISSIDENCE BY STUDENTS AND OTHERS WHICH WOULD SHAKE KOREA'S POLITICAL STABILITY AND DO GREAT HARM TO ITS SECURITY. HE NOTED THERE WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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ALREADY CONSIDERABLE UNCERTAINTY IN KOREA AS A RESULT OF DISCUSSION OF GROUND FORCE WITHDRAWAL WHICH WOULD BE COMPOUNDED BY RELEASE OF MYONGDONG DEFENDANTS. RELEASE THUS WOULD ONLY LEAD TO NEW ROUND OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES AND FURTHER ARRESTS AGGRAVATING US OPINION. MOST IMPORTANT FOR KOREA IN VIEW OF THE THREAT POSED BY THE NORTH TODAY IS POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STABILITY AND NATIONAL CONSENSUS AND UNITY. THESE ARE ESSENTIAL TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, MILITARY SELF-RELIANCE, AND CHECKING THE NORTH KOREAN THREAT. HE FEELS VAST MAJORITY OF KOREANS SUPPORT HIS POSITION EVEN THOUGHT THEY DONOT ENJOY FULL DEGREE OF FREEDOM AND RIGHTS. NEVERTHELESS HE WELCOMED ADVICE GIVEN BY CONGRESSMEN AS COMING FROM THOSE WHO ARE UNDERSTANDING.

5. WITH RESPECT TO TROOP WITHDRAWAL, WOLFF NOTED HIS PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH PARK INCLUDING THAT IN 1975 AND POINTED OUT THAT PHASED WITHDRAWAL NOT NEW POLICY AND CONGRESS WOULD NOT PERMIT KOREA'S SECURITY TO BE THREATENED OR WITHDRAWAL ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT KOREA BEING ABLE TO WITH-

STAND NORTH KOREAN ATTACK. HE REFERRED ALSO TO HIS PRESS
CONFERENCE STATEMENTS IN JAPAN TO THIS EFFECT. HE MENTIONED
THAT PARK HIMSELF HAD TALKED OF TROOP WITHDRAWAL ONCE KOREAN
GROUND FORCES WERE STRONG ENOUGH.

6. PART REMEMBERED HIS '75 DISCUSSIONS WITH WOLFF ON TROOP
WITHDRAWAL. WHILE HOPING US FORCES WOULD STAY UNTIL
THERE IS PERMANENT PEACE AND NORTH KOREAN THREAT IS TERMINATED,
AT LEAST IT IS ESSENTIAL TO STRENGTHEN KOREA'S
MILITARY CAPABILITIES SO AS TO BE ABLE TO DEFEND COUNTRY
WITHOUT US GROUND FORCES. HE REALIZED IT DIFFICULT TO ASK
US TO STAY ANY LONGER SINCE WE HAVE BEEN HERE ALMOST THIRTY
YEARS AND HE IS NOT IN A POSITION TO REQUEST THIS. KOREA
THEREFORE ACCEPTS AS FACT GROUND FORCES WITHDRAWAL AND WILL
PREPARE ITSELF PROCEEDING IN TANDEM WITH STRENGTHENING OF ITS OWN
MILITARY CAPABILITIES. PARK NOTED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER
HAD EXPRESSED A SIMILAR INTENT. HE FELT THAT WITHIN FOUR
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OR FIVE YEARS WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FORCES IMPROVE-
MENT PLAN KOREA WOULD BE ABLE TO STRENGTHEN ITS FORCES
SUFFICIENTLY. HOWEVER IT NEEDED US HELP AND COOPERATION IN
SELLING TO KOREA THE MANY WEAPONS AND MILITARY HARDWARE
REQUIRED.
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